

I think that the time has come to eliminate CW testing for the ham bands. Today it is no longer relevant, as most communications occur on phone. The emergency use of CW is also hard to justify, since there are many other digital modes available with superior performance under poor propagation conditions.

CW is difficult to learn. The time and effort involved pushes many would be hams away. Also the time spent learning CW could better be used learning about other technical items which would be helpful to pursuing the hobby. Most people simply learn enough CW to pass the exams, then never use it on the radio. What's the point?

It is also very difficult for handicapped people to pass an exam, why should they be put through this? They should be allowed to enjoy the hobby as every other ham does.

The whole idea of CW subbands also must be addressed. When tuning through an HF band I notice only a tiny amount of CW stations. If I tune up the band there is a large gathering of phone ops crowding into a sliver of spectrum. There is often severe interference, especially during special events like contests. We need more phone space.

In conclusion, people today are extremely busy. No one has the time to sit around pounding their head off the wall to learn CW skills which are completely irrelevant. We need to pursue getting more people into the amateur service, not slamming the door in their faces. Recent emergencies have demonstrated the need of having hams all over the US, so we need to be welcoming new hams. I hope that common sense is used here and we don't get caught in listening to special interest groups trying to preserve CW at the risk of destroying our entire hobby.

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